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**ECHELONS ABOVE CORPS
PERSONNEL SERVICE SUPPORT IN
OPERATION DESERT SHIELD
AND DESERT STORM**

BY

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Personnel support during Operation Desert Shield/Storm exceeded all doctrinal standards. The command and control of personnel support was directed through 10th PERSCOM and three Personnel Groups, 7th Personnel Group and 18th Personnel Group in support of their respective corps, and 3rd Personnel Group in support of non-corps units or EAC. This Personal Experience Monograph describes my experiences as deputy commander of 3rd Personnel Group in the establishment of three wartime personnel functions: postal, replacement, and casualty operations. The monograph elaborates on issues related to : command, organization, personnel support structure, reserve component training and the need for the creation of a joint casualty reporting system. This monograph reviews personnel support during an unprecedented period of wartime turbulence and identifies areas for doctrinal modification.

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCE MONOGRAPH

by

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PREFACE

I consider myself extremely fortunate to have served in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The personal and professional experience I gained in these operations exceeded those of my previous nineteen years of service. Especially valuable was the bond formed between the soldiers and officers with whom I served, which continues to be a source of inspiration. Also, I will be forever grateful to my wife for the devotion she gave to the families of 3rd Personnel Group soldiers. Her tireless efforts to care for sick children and provide for the needs of spouses was an expression of unfeigned love.

INTRODUCTION

FM 12-6 PERSONNEL DOCTRINE outlines seven critical functions that are basic to wartime personnel service support. From highest priority these functions are: Replacement Operations, Strength Management, Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting, Casualty Management, Personnel Data Base Management, Personnel Information Management, and Postal Operations. However, these priorities may vary from time to time, depending on the operational environment. This paper focuses on my observations of the 3rd Personnel Group's (PG) handling of three most critical functions during Operation Desert Storm: Replacement Operations, Casualty Management, and Postal Operations. I will outline the command and control structure established to command non-corps personnel units. Additionally, I will review the proposed doctrinal changes to correct command and control deficiencies experienced by Personnel Groups during Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

PREDEPLOYMENT

While I was completing a tour of duty in Panama, Iraq's military forces occupied Kuwait. Shortly thereafter I was assigned to serve as Deputy Commander, 3rd Personnel Group (PG), III Corps/Ft. Hood. In early August, FORSCOM directed that III Corps be prepared to deploy to Desert Shield as the "Heavy Corps." If III Corps did not deploy, 3rd PG was to deploy in support of Third Army.

Corps Personnel Groups, new to the army structure, were

scheduled for activation 15 Sep 90. The events developing in Kuwait dictated a rapid activation of the Group. Comprehensive planning and coordination by III Corps AG staff paid dividends. Their preparations for incorporating personnel, support, and staff functions into the group were completed in late July. Consequently, the transition to a Group structure was smooth and virtually flawless.

With the establishment of Personnel Groups, Corps assumed personnel service support missions previously performed at division level by Personnel Service Companies (PSC). The 3rd PG took command and control of the 502d PSC from 2d Armored Division (AD); 546th PSC, which supported Corps non-divisional units; 15th PSC from 1st Cavalry Division (CAV); 21st Replacement Detachment; and garrison support from III Corps HHC. The other divisions of III Corps, not located at Ft. Hood, retained command and control of its PSCs. The 15th PSC was attached back to 1st CAV during its deployment to Desert Shield/Storm on 9 Oct 90.

Preparation for deployment of 3rd PG took place from August to October 90, concentrating primarily on soldier readiness (NBC training, weapons qualifications, etc.) and obtaining critical equipment, (expando vans and High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV)). The 502d and 546th PSCs deployed on 10 Oct 90. Both companies provided personnel service support to non-corps units on an area basis. The 502d supported units in Riyadh, and the 546th supported units in Dhahran. The Personnel Group HHD and 21st Replacement Regulating Detachment (RRD)

deployed on 17 Dec 90. Group headquarters set up operations in Dhahran. The 21st RRD set up operations in Riyadh; however within weeks the 21st RRD was relocated to King Khalid Military City (KKMC).

ESTABLISHING OPERATIONS

Command and Control:

In August 90, Third Army Adjutant General and his staff arrived in Saudi Arabia and established non-corps personnel operations in Dhahran. Third Army immediately established 3d PERSCOM (PROV) for command and control of personnel units, the Adjutant General was designated as the commander. In November, concurrent with the decision to deploy VII Corps, DA DCSOPS granted the approval for the activation of a Theater Army PERSCOM. Tenth PERSCOM activated in December and was co-located with Third Army Headquarters in Riyadh; Third PERSCOM was inactivated. Third Personnel Group, as previously stated, assumed command of non-corps personnel units.

Soon after arriving in Dhahran in Dec 90, Brigadier General (BG) Tom Sikora, 10th PERSCOM Commander, visited 3rd PG headquarters. He outlined his concept of operation and designated systems essential for support of the theater. It was clear that operationally BG Sikora was our commander. However, Lieutenant General (LTG) William Pagonis, the 22d Support Command (SUPCOM) Commander, felt that all units performing support

missions in his area of operations were under his command. BG Sikora and Col Earl Halbrook, the 3rd Personnel Group Commander, felt that if LTG Pagonis was in the chain-of-command, he would have a vested interest in supporting the personnel missions. Consequently, the group chain of command went from the 10th PERSCOM Commander to the 22d SUPCOM Commander.

Two major flaws with the structure of Personnel Groups became evident. First, the commander's span of control was too large, since each Personnel Group commanded twelve to fifteen companies. Secondly, special staffs were too small for brigade level operations, so the Operations Staff (S-3) and Logistics Staff (S-4) required substantial augmentation. Each staff required twice its original authorization level to perform operations. The S-3 shop monitored all personnel missions and units and developed training programs to improve postal, replacement, and casualty operations. The S-3 required additional personnel to conduct 24-hour operations. The Operations Officer, S-3, also functioned as the Intelligence Officer (S-2). The S-4 shop also played a major role in establishing replacement and postal operations. The job of locating supplies and equipment (cots, bottled water, etc.) seemed endless.

The 3rd PG had three battalion-size units and eleven company-size units located in four geographically dispersed areas. (See Map, Appendix I.) In mid-January when VII and XVIII Corps moved north, SUPCOM also established a forward support base

in King Khalid Military City (KKMC). As part of the forward support base 3rd PG moved the 320th Postal to provide general support, 755th Postal to provide direct support, 21st RRD to provide replacement support, and the 442d PSC to provide personnel support for non-corps units. In the early stages of establishing KKMC as a support base for the ground war, competition for limited resources was keen. The 320th General Support (GS) Postal Company encountered the greatest obstacles in establishing operations. Because the company lacked forklifts, trucks, and a loading dock, tons of unprocessed mail accumulated daily.

I proposed to COL Halbrook that we establish a provisional battalion to command and control all companies located at KKMC. Establishment of a battalion would give the group a single point of contact to interface with the Commanding General at KKMC and consolidate command and control. COL Halbrook agreed with my proposal and selected a promotable major from the 502d PSC to be the commander. Equipment and personnel were taken from throughout the group to establish the 3rd Personnel & Administrative Battalion (P&A Bn).

Personnel and postal companies in Dhahran and Riyadh were also organized under a single battalion, the 1st P&A Bn. Each battalion provided postal, replacement and personnel service support.

All Personnel Groups in Desert Storm experienced similar problems with span of control. Every personnel after-action

report highlighted the inability of the Personnel Group to command and control large numbers of units. The 7th and 18th personnel groups also established battalions to solve span-of-control problems.

The 3rd Personnel Group command and control structure was rounded out with the assignment of the 386th P&A Bn to the Group in January 1991. Initially the battalion was under the control of Replacement Directorate, PERSCOM. The 386th, an army reserve unit from Mississippi, deployed as a P&A battalion. However, upon its arrival to Saudi Arabia, it was assigned as the theater replacement battalion. The 386th had never been actively involved in day-to-day missions of assigning and controlling replacements. Also, replacement battalions have an operation section of approximately forty personnel that P&A battalions do not have. Without this critical section the performance of theater replacement missions is extremely difficult. To conduct replacement operations, the 386th required daily assistance and supervision. However, the distance from the battalion to PERSCOM, over 200 miles, caused the battalion to become isolated. Subsequently, the 386th was attached to 3rd Personnel Group. (See 3rd PG organizational chart, Appendix II).

Replacement Operations:

Replacements are a combat multiplier; they contribute significantly to winning wars. A soldier's morale is directly affected by the treatment he/she receives while processing

through the replacement system. Within 40 days of arrival, 3rd PG and 10th PERSCOM established a massive replacement operation that exceeded doctrinal standards. Replacement Regulating Detachment (RRD) organized to handle up to 400 replacements per day, processed and supported up to 1200 soldiers per day. Without exception, the personnel community ensured that operational commanders had soldiers in the proper numbers and skills during Desert Shield/Storm.

From August until early January, 3d PERSCOM (Prov) controlled non-corps replacement operations. The 22d and 23rd Replacement Regulating Detachments (RRD), under 3d PERSCOM, received and processed incoming units, which conflicts with army personnel doctrine. (Doctrinally, RRD's process individual soldiers, not units, into the area of operation.) The 23d RRD conducted operations at the main arrival airfield, and the 22d RRD controlled a facility called "The Expo." Both were located in Dhahran. The Expo, a very large convention and equipment exhibition facility, was an excellent staging area.

Replacements from August until December consisted primarily of late deploying personnel and small numbers of individual replacements. In January the operational tempo picked up in preparation for the ground war. Personnel plans for the ground war identified requirements for a large number of replacements. The primary APOD until Jan 91, King Aziz Airport in Dhahran, was already overtaxed with equipment shipments. To handle the increase of replacements an additional APOD was needed.

King Fahd International Airport (KFIA) was designated as the primary APOD to handle the increase in replacements. Still under construction, this airport was located approximately fifty miles north of Dhahran; it had recently been turned over to the U.S. Military as an airbase. The runway was completed, but all other support facilities (billeting, latrines, dining, etc.) were pre-fab buildings or tents. Preparations had not been made to receive large numbers of replacements.

The 386th P&A battalion commander was responsible to 10th PERSCOM for replacement operations at KFIA. The title "International Airport" is misleading, the facility consisted of a runway, a large German fest tent, and one operation trailer. The working environment made it very difficult to provide for soldiers' needs. There was a shortage of drinking water, latrine facilities, and protection from the sun. COL Halbrook accompanied BG Sikora during his initial visit to KFIA. BG Sikora was appalled to see soldiers sleeping on the ground, latrines running over, tents not erected for protection from the sun, and soldiers going without food and water. After his visit, BG Sikora directed Col Halbrook to coordinate with SUPCOM to improve the facility's capability for receiving and processing replacements.

Upon COL Halbrook's return to group headquarters, he gave me the mission to move to KFIA and coordinate the establishment of the APOD. That same day I identified two officers and three NCOs who would accompany me to KFIA. I also made an office call to BG

Jones, Deputy SUPCOM Commander, to solicit his support. He asked me what I needed. I replied, "Sir, I don't know, but if you will visit the APOD in two days I'll tell you." He seemed to be supportive and agreed to visit the APOD. With SUPCOM's support and a lot of hard work, the APOD quickly turned into a first class operation. During BG Sikora's return visit, the Replacement Battalion Commander and Col Halbbrook accompanied him through the operation. He was very pleased to see the changes.

Over the next couple of months the replacement operation grew in complexity. The sheer number of replacements vastly exceeded operational capabilities of the RRDs. Doctrinally one general support replacement regulating detachment can support up to 400 replacements per day. By January the 875th RRD at KFIA was trying to handle an average of 1200 replacements per day. To alleviate the situation, 3rd PG assigned additional NCO's to the 875th RRD.

In January and early February, aircraft carrying 360 or more soldiers routinely arrived at KFIA without prior notice to the APOD. During this early troop build-up, communications between the APOD and 10th PERSCOM were nonexistent. The APOD had not been incorporated into the communication system at this time. To correct the problem two officers from PERSCOM were reassigned to 3rd PG headquarters in Dhahran to coordinate replacement assignments. When an aircraft would arrive, the RRD would courier flight manifests to group headquarters, where assignments were made. Replacement processing stopped for hours, since very

little could be done to arrange transportation or notify gaining units. By mid February communications with 10th PERSCOM improved. Flight manifests and assignment information began arriving at the APOD approximately 12 hours prior to replacements, thereby allowing processing time to be reduced to a minimum.

Neither 3rd PG nor the 386th Bn had sufficient staffs to manage theater replacement operations. In order to effectively manage and process replacements, the operation section of a replacement battalion was duplicated. This 45-person operation section worked directly for 3rd PG headquarters but coordinated all assignments directly with 10th PERSCOM. Additionally, a movement control team was established with a transportation corps captain in charge. The team consisted of two lieutenants and a cell of movement specialists. When replacements started moving by C-130's, the movement control team relocated from KFIA to 3rd PG operations center. The relocation improved coordination with SUPCOM transportation officers, who controlled army C-130 requirements. Establishment of the operation section significantly enhanced management and processing of replacements.

XVIII and VII Corps moved north in January to their forward staging areas and established corps replacement operations. Each corps commander used a different method for assigning Squads, Crews, and Teams (SCTs). XVIII Corps Commander quickly processed replacements to the divisions. SCTs arriving at VII Corps Replacement Center were held in the corps rear and integrated

into the divisions as the commander deemed appropriate. Consequently, VII Corps established a three hundred daily flow cap for receiving replacements. Initially the backlog of replacements created by VII Corps was moved to the 21st Replacement Detachment at KKMC. KKMC's ability to handle these replacements was quickly exhausted. This situation forced 3rd PG to establish a holding area at Kobar Towers, Dhahran. An RRD from VII Corps then relocated to Kobar Towers to provide command and control of their replacements. Numerous SCTs programmed for VII Corps remained in replacement centers for the duration of Desert Storm.

When the air war began on January 17, movement of replacements picked up in preparation for the ground war. All replacements were transported from KFIA by C-130's to each Corps and SUPCOM Support Base at KKMC; other replacements continued to move via bus. The 23d RRD located in Dhahran moved to KFIA to assist the 875th RRD in replacement operations. Flights were scheduled to transport 66 soldiers and their equipment to a single destination. Assignment orders were adjusted to accommodate flight manifest requirements on each soldier-- name, rank, social security number, and unit of assignment. This change eliminated the requirement to produce a flight manifest in addition to orders. Improved communications between 3rd PG, 10th PERSCOM and CONUS replacement centers permitted APOD operations to prepare to receive replacements in advance of their arrival. Advance assignments and prearranged transportation then reduced

the time spent in the APOD from days to hours.

Postal Operations:

No one anticipated the magnitude of postal support required during Operations Desert Shield/Storm. The volume of mail exceeded all expectations, averaging over 500 short tons per day. In Moving Mountains, LTG Pagonis described postal support as "the largest concentrated postal operation in the history of the United States Postal Service." An apparently simple process - delivering mail - was complicated by limited planning, massive volume, inexperienced leaders, constrained resources and a constantly moving customer.

Prior to Desert Shield all postal support to units in Saudi Arabia was provided by permanent Air Force postal units. In September 90 Third PERSCOM took over the Air Force postal support facility in King Aziz Airport, Dhahran. Air Force postal personnel did not like relinquishing postal support, since airmen represented a major portion of the population. The 1241st postal, a National Guard unit from Alabama, assumed the direct support postal mission. However, there was no operational or doctrinal requirement for the Air Force to relinquish the mission. The Air Force could and should have continued to provide direct postal support. Actually, 3rd PERSCOM (Prov) replaced a well-trained, well-equipped, functioning direct support postal operation with an inexperienced, poorly-trained, ill-equipped RC postal unit. Postal support to soldiers and

airmen in Dhahran went downhill quickly.

A postal plan and an overall support concept was never developed by 3rd PERSCOM. The lack of coordination with the United States Postal Service resulted in 500 to 700 tons of mail arriving daily at a single Army Post Office (APO), which obviously placed a tremendous work load on the unit. By doctrine, army postal units can process .24 lbs of mail per soldier per day, but received up to 1.61 lbs per soldier per day. Postal missions and responsibilities were not clearly defined until the establishment of 10th PERSCOM in early January.

The primary mission of 3rd PG upon arrival in December was clearly to move the mail. The Group assumed command of two postal units, 351st General Support (GS) Postal and 1241st Direct Support (DS) Postal in Dhahran. Subsequently, the 351st was assigned to 10th PERSCOM. General support and direct support postal operations are significantly different. GS postal receives large pallets of bulk mail from the airfield, then breaks it down and moves it to DS postal companies who service units. Due to a shortage of forklifts and an inadequate facility, mail was backed up at the direct support units. However, general support postal operations were going well. With only one corps in theater from August to December, transportation assets for GS postal were not a problem. However, the situation changed significantly when VII Corps arrived and operations moved north to KKMC. Mail delivery distances in many cases tripled. Locating units became extremely difficult over extended

distances.

The first theater postal unit to arrive in Saudi Arabia was the 1241st DS Postal Company in August 90. The 1241st had recently converted from a signal to a postal unit and was not prepared to assume postal missions. Less than twenty-five percent of unit personnel was MOS qualified. The 1241st had never performed postal operations. The unit was unable to perform even the simplest mission without extensive guidance.

Within weeks of 3rd PG arriving in Saudi Arabia, the 320th, 834th, and 755th Postal Companies arrived in Dhahran. The 834th assumed the general support mission from the 351st for the theater in Dhahran. The 320th and 755th companies moved north to provide general and direct postal support at KKMC. The 834th and 755th Postal Companies are strong units with experienced postal personnel. The 834th Postal had exceptionally strong officer and NCO leadership. The 1241st, 834th, 320th, and 755th postal companies rounded out the 3rd PG postal structure.

The tremendous volume of incoming mail continued through March. In addition to the magnitude of mail from family and friends, tons of "TO ANY SOLDIER" mail arrived daily, creating additional backlogs. Processing mail became increasingly difficult as soldiers and units constantly changed locations. The automated locator system was not kept updated with current location data of soldiers and units; therefore it was ineffective in redirecting mail. Consequently, hundreds of military and civilian volunteers worked night and day to keep mail moving.

Processing mail had greatly improved by the time the ground war ended. The system was better prepared to handle the large volume of mail anticipated during redeployment. Kobar Towers, Dhahran, capable of housing up to 50,000 soldiers, served as the major redeployment center. A parking garage in Kobar Towers was converted into probably the largest postal operation in the Army. The facility had ten customer service windows and was capable of operating 24 hours a day. During redeployment seventy percent of outgoing mail was processed in Dhahran. Over 30 tons of mail, primarily duffle bags, was processed each day. The postal system had become the means by which soldiers returned personal possessions and equipment to their home station.

The opportunity for soldiers to transport contraband--war trophies, munitions--increased during redeployment. Security tightened and detailed inspections of personal gear were conducted during redeployment processing. However, the same level of security was not instituted for postal processing. Mail inspections in CONUS revealed contraband coming from military postal facilities in Saudi Arabia. Thus, measures were taken to inspect and scan all mail prior to it being palletized for air shipment. Procedures instituted to screen mail stopped the shipment of contraband but resulted in significant delays. At one time, duffle-bags were stacked two or three high over an area that would cover a football field. Additional scanners and around-the-clock processing eventually reduced the outgoing mail backlog to a manageable level.

Casualty Operations:

From the time 3rd PG arrived in Saudi Arabia, casualty operations weighed heavy on our minds. The timely and accurate flow of casualty information is absolutely essential in retaining the will of the American people. Incorrect or untimely casualty information plays havoc with the will and spirit of the people back home.

Casualty operations is an information-driven system. Information regarding the occurrence of a casualty and the current status of a casualty is critical to accurate casualty reporting. Equally important to loved ones is how the casualty happened, or what happened.

My experience during Operation Just Cause taught me the value of establishing a safety net for gathering casualty information. In some cases soldiers were injured in downtown Panama City and medivaced to San Antonio, Texas, within six hours. The efficiency of the evacuation system exceeded the commander's ability to provide instantaneous casualty information. Live television coverage and pay phones on the battlefield circumvented the casualty system in Just Cause. According to Army doctrine, FM 12-6, the unit has 24 hours to submit casualty information to the battalion. Likewise the battalion has 24 hours to report to the personnel service company. And the PSC has 24 hours to submit to PERSCOM. This three-day period to handle casualty data is no longer realistic; information travels in a matter of hours, not days.

The importance of casualty information has placed a significant demand on the personnel community. Without close coordination with medical personnel, casualties can be evacuated to the United States prior to notification of the higher command. Casualty Liaison Teams must be placed at every point in the medical system to gather accurate information and to report in a timely manner.

In today's environment, the personnel system gathers casualty information from multiple sources. In some cases, it informs the commander of a casualty. This does not diminish the importance of casualty information from the unit. The critical information link between the soldier and the soldier's family is still the commander, especially when a soldier is killed in action.

Casualty Liaison Teams are a critical asset, and they are resource intensive. In Desert Storm each corps established teams within its medical system. XVIII Corps placed teams in medical facilities immediately upon arrival in Saudi Arabia. The 3rd PG established Casualty Liaison Teams in every facility above corps, to include Navy medical ships. Over seventy-five percent of the personnel service companies' soldiers were utilized in casualty operations.

Fortunately our casualty system was never fully tested, except for the SCUD attack in Dhahran. This attack highlighted a major shortfall in the casualty system. Host nation casualty support was never coordinated between U.S. and Saudi medical

authorities. Under the Saudi Civil Defense Plan, citizens are required to pick up injured personnel and take them to the nearest medical facility. During the SCUD attack a Saudi bus driver, acting in good faith, transported many casualties to a Saudi hospital. Once our soldiers were in the hands of Saudi medical authorities, they were subject to the patient information policies of the Saudi government, which is basically a closed system. When the Saudi medical authorities released information it was extremely limited. We were forced to engage in intense negotiating to obtain information and release of soldiers to U.S. military medical personnel. The incompatibility of systems caused needless delays in forwarding critical casualty data.

Although large numbers of casualties did not occur in Operation Desert Storm, critical lessons were learned about the casualty reporting system. The major casualty issue centered around the difference in casualty reporting procedures for each service. Releasable information, service casualty codes, and specification of to whom information can be released is different for each service. For example, the Navy uses an extensive code system to identify the specific wound and the degree of injury. Without access to the codes the information is of no value. Other services with soldiers on hospital ships experience lengthy delays in obtaining critical casualty data. Soldiers are commonly taken for treatment to the first available medical facility regardless of which service operates the facility. A joint casualty reporting procedure for all services would improve

the efficiency of casualty reporting in joint operations. The desire of each service to report casualties through its own system is understandable. However, this concern does not diminish the importance of standardizing casualty reporting data, to include identifying codes.

FUTURE STRUCTURE

In today's strategic environment, force structure must maximize capabilities to meet a variety of operational scenarios. Like combat forces, combat support and combat service support forces require a structure capable of providing support across the continuum of military operations. As a result of Operation Desert Storm numerous changes are evolving in personnel structure and systems .

Responses to the Army Of Excellence (AOE) studies in late 1980 changed operations for both peacetime and wartime Personnel Service Support (PSS). The command structure for Corps personnel support was provided by Personnel Administrative (P&A) battalions, which commanded all corps non-divisional personnel companies and detachments. Division personnel units, personnel service companies, and replacement detachments were division units normally supervised by the Division G1. Under AOE all personnel support, corps and divisional, was consolidated under a single corps command, Personnel Group (PG). With the establishment of the Personnel Group, P&A battalions were eliminated from the active structure. In the Reserve Components,

P&A battalions were converted to CONUS replacement battalions. Consequently, personnel service support for all corps units, division and non-division, came directly under the Corps Adjutant General (AG), who also functioned as the Personnel Group Commander, a brigade level command.

In August 1990 six personnel groups were activated; three deployed to Desert Storm. The groups and their support elements provided direct personnel service support to tactical operations. The major shortfall in personnel group structure is the span-of-control.

Senior personnel officers were not surprised by span of control problems encountered by personnel groups. Groups assumed command of three to four times the number of companies previously commanded by P&A battalions, with half the special staff. Provisional battalion commands were established by each personnel group for command and control of company size elements. The activation of Personnel Service Battalions (PSB), July 1993, into the army structure will help solve the span of control problem of personnel groups. However, I believe the PSB has some serious flaws.

The concept of personnel service battalions is excellent; however, major shortfalls restrict the ability of commanders to operate as a battalion. The PSB is a conversion of the Personnel Services Company to a battalion with no additional personnel. This creates a significant shortfall of personnel in the battalion headquarters. Unlike other battalions, it does not

have a special staff--S-1, S-2, S-3, or S-4. As mentioned previously under command and control issues, the S-Staff of a personnel group is not resourced at a level commensurate with a brigade level command. The limited staff of personnel groups and the absence of special staffs in the PSB severely constrain the commander's ability to care for and train soldiers. The PSB may function well during peacetime, since it is in essence a company commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel. But, to maximize the value of PSBs as an intermediate command upon deployment the requirement for a special staff is essential. The flexibility of the modular structure is lost if the battalion cannot stand alone and sustain operations.

The basic PSB structure for personnel support is the detachment with two platoons--an Information and Systems Platoon, and a Personnel Management and Action Platoon. Platoons are designed to perform specific functions, which limits the commander's flexibility. Unlike current functional design of platoons, a multi-functional platoon, consisting of multi-functional squads or teams, can perform an entire spectrum of support.

The personnel community is currently consolidating its five separate Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) into a single MOS. Personnel soldiers in the future will possess skills to perform all personnel functions. These newly trained soldiers will provide the basis to develop personnel platoons to support battalions and brigades. Additionally, as commanding generals

move major elements on the battlefield to gain operational advantages, personnel commanders can adjust their support package to parallel the task force alignment.

One such tailored support package, a major success of Operation Desert Storm, was the organization of a multi-functional personnel team to support 3rd Brigade (Tiger Brigade), 1st Cav Division, attached to the 2d Marine Division for the ground war. Upon its transfer to the Marines, Tiger Bde became a non-corps unit. Personnel support for the brigade was transferred from XVIII Personnel Group to 3rd Personnel Group which established a mobile personnel support team (Tiger Team) to provide Tiger Bde with complete personnel support. Tiger team consisted of a 1st Lieutenant, a sergeant, two corporals, and nine soldiers, with the following equipment: a 5-ton expando van, 2.5 ton mill van, 1/4 ton truck, two generators, Tactical Army Combat Service Support Computer System (TACCS), laptop computers, and camouflage. The team linked up with Tiger Bde within two days. Tiger team provided personnel service support, to include postal operations, through every assault phase and into the brigade's defensive position north of Kuwait City. The brigade commander praised the team for the quality of support to his soldiers and recognized four of the team soldiers for valor during the assault into Kuwait.

In addition to large operations, a multi-functional platoon provides the ability to support operations short of war. For example, as brigade-size elements deploy from CONUS to perform

various missions, the personnel platoon supporting the brigade can deploy intact. Under the current structure, the PSB commander must take assets from different platoons to form an ad hoc personnel support package. In preparation for activation of personnel service battalions in June 1993, the 15th PSC, 3rd PG, has established multi-functional platoons to support the 1st CAV. The recent deployment of elements within the 1st CAV to Kuwait validated the utility and flexibility of the platoon concept. This was reinforced with the deployment of similar platoons from the 546th PSC to Somalia.

SUMMARY

Personnel Service Support:

Personnel service support can directly affect the success of combat operations. The personnel commander's job in any operation is to support the operational commander. Personnel support and systems coordinated by the Total Army Personnel Center (TAPC), such as replacement operations and casualty notifications, are an integral component of personnel service support. Many times TAPC dictates the method of support. Personnel commanders in the area of operations are still held accountable for support. A viable personnel support structure that synchronizes personnel systems from all levels is essential to attain and maintain our ability to respond to varied contingencies.

Operation Desert Storm highlighted numerous weaknesses within personnel support that contingency operations such as Just Cause did not surface. During the first four or five months of Desert Storm, personnel support above XVIII Corps was in disarray. Personnel plans and systems were either non-existent or were developed on an ad hoc basis. This period was marked by volumes of messages outlining procedures for personnel support. Personnel officers throughout the system were trying to figure out what to do: Take records? How to account for soldiers? What about SIDPERS? How to take care of soldiers' actions? What about automation? How to update files? Use TACCS? Receive support from parent installation? How to handle replacements? Everyone in the personnel community was asking for guidance. Confusion occurs when wartime systems are not in place and attempts are made to overlay stovepipe peacetime systems on general wartime conditions.

In the emerging security environment, future operations will require a capabilities-driven force. With the exception of operations short of war, Operation Desert Storm provide an excellent backdrop for capabilities requirements. During Operation Desert Storm the mission priority varied depending on the operational phase of the war. Postal operations took center stage from the start. But just prior to the ground war, replacement and casualty operations became increasingly important. When the war stopped, redeployment and postal operations dominated personnel support.

Multi-functional personnel support structure under development as a result of lessons learned in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, will integrate support from the personnel clerk through the platoon, detachment, personnel service battalion and Personnel Group. This capability is consistent with our current military strategy. As additional equipment is added, personnel commanders will gain the flexibility, mobility, and sustainability required to accommodate any likely operational or tactical contingency.

RC Postal Training and Utilization:

The majority of postal units are in the Reserve Component (RC), where training time is limited. Given only 48 training assemblies and 12-15 annual training days, it takes an imaginative RC commander to establish effective postal training. Seeking to protect postal worker jobs, postal unions have virtually locked military units out of performing postal operations in CONUS. Consequently, it is very difficult for RC postal units to train without going on OCONUS annual training. Even during training exercises, a postal unit cannot experience all facets of postal operations.

Training opportunities will decline for RC postal units as the army continues to draw down OCONUS forces; concurrently, the dependency on postal support from the RC will increase. The most urgent training requirement is the preparation of postal commanders and NCOs to lead soldiers and perform postal operations. Their dedication is admirable, but their experience

and training is limited.

The Total Army Personnel Command and Soldier Support Center are developing training initiatives to correct the shortfall in RC postal training and leader development. However, the most productive initiative is the utilization of RC postal companies in contingency operations and major training exercises. If the proposed training initiatives do not materialize the vast experience gained from Desert Storm will be lost.

Under any operational contingency the army is dependent on reserve postal units for postal support. During Operation Desert Shield/Storm thirteen army postal units deployed, eleven were RC. However, there seems to be a reluctance by senior leaders to activate RC postal units for contingency short of partial mobilization. This was most evidenced by the formation of a volunteer postal company, 700th Postal, from within the RC to deploy to Somalia. The formation of ad hoc units to meet contingency missions denies trained and ready reserve units valuable operational experience. As we continue to downsize the active force military leaders must prudently exercise the authority to selectively mobilize RC units and resist the formation of ad hoc organization for contingency operations. RC units must be capable of meeting the real-world missions that challenge the new force structure.

Postal Support:

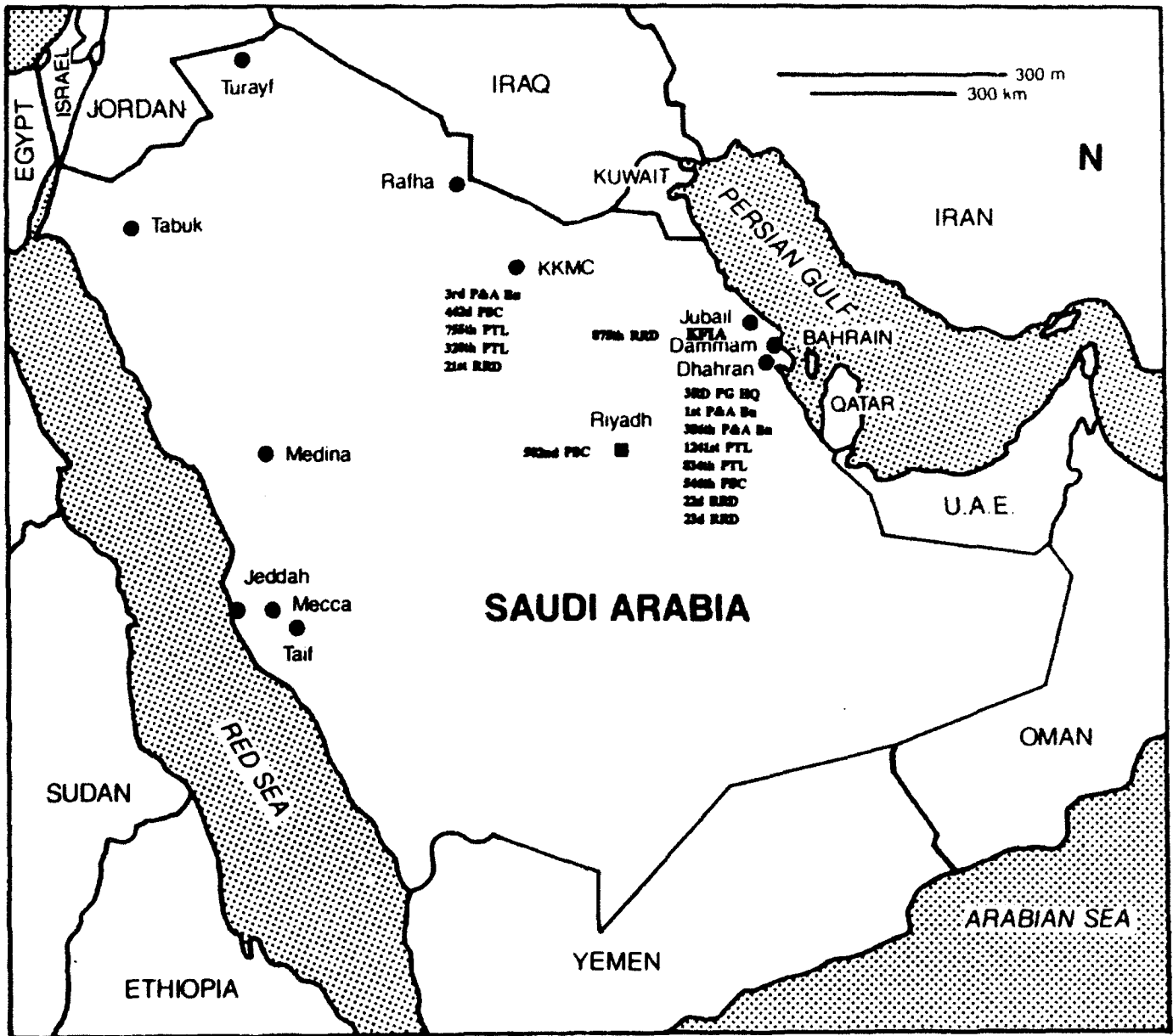
The mobile nature of combat operations will not change significantly in the future. Soldiers will move from unit to

unit, and units (companies, battalions, and brigades) will routinely change their operational control. Tracking units' locations should be an easy process in today's automated environment, but currently it is not. The Army has always used a numerical system to identify units; every unit has its own identification code, UIC. A preassigned postal designation is in place for geographical areas--Germany, Japan, Korea, etc. This system can be extended to Army units, ships, and squadrons throughout the military. A more efficient system for processing mail can be achieved through automated sorting to brigade, battalion, and company levels.

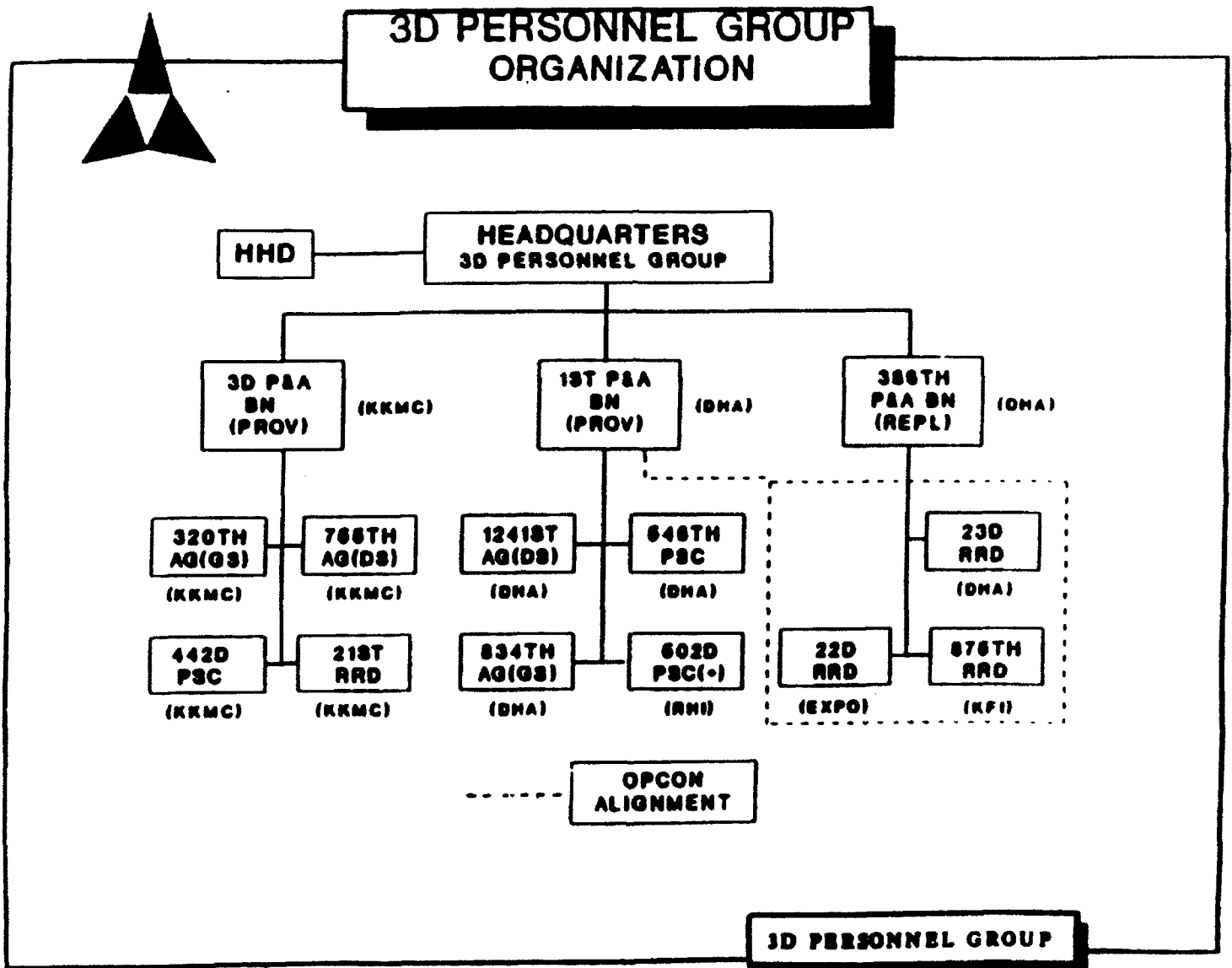
Conclusion:

Army personnel leaders and planners are using the many lessons from Operation Desert Shield/Storm to prepare for future operations. Yet even with these experiences, leaders cannot predict the exact course of events. The success of personnel operations in future combat operations will depend on our ability to tailor personnel service support to satisfy operational requirements in a constantly changing strategic environment.

APPENDIX I



APPENDIX II



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